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Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind

Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

Convention on Biological Diversity

Implementation of United Nations environmental conventions

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the reports submitted by the secretariats of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and the Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as a joint submission on cooperative activities of the three secretariats.

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Implementation of United Nations environmental conventions

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I. Report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on the work of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention

A. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, by resolution 58/243 of 23 December 2003, invited the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[1] to report to it at its fifty-ninth session on the work of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. The present report is submitted in response to that invitation.

B. Outcome of the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties

1. Summary

2. The Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held its ninth session in Milan, Italy, from 1 to 12 December 2003. The Conference resolved a number of outstanding issues on the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol[2] and explored a wide range of options for limiting greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the impacts of climate change. The Framework Convention has reached near-universality, with 189 States having become parties and the Kyoto Protocol having been ratified by 124.

2. Outcome of the ninth session

3. The formal decisions adopted by the Conference, some of which are noted below, will strengthen the institutional framework of both the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol.

4. The agreement on the modalities and procedures for afforestation and reforestation ("sinks") project activities under the clean development mechanism completed the Marrakesh Accords[3] by expanding the mechanism to the forestry sector. The mechanism allows industrialized countries (parties included in annex I to the Convention) to implement projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions in a developing country (parties not included in annex I to the Convention). The certified emission reduction units generated by such projects can be used by industrialized countries to help meet their emissions targets under the Kyoto Protocol. Clean development mechanism projects also help developing countries to achieve sustainable development and contribute to the ultimate objective of the Framework Convention. It is expected that the rules agreed upon by the Conference will provide incentives for local communities to engage in afforestation and reforestation activities, and will ensure quality projects that do not result in negative impacts for the host country.

5. Modalities for small-scale forestry projects will be further elaborated in the future. New emission reporting guidelines based on the good-practice guidance provided by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change will provide a sound and reliable foundation for reporting the sequestration and emissions of carbon resulting from land-use changes and forestry. The initial reports of industrialized countries are due in 2005.

6. The Conference adopted decisions on the Special Climate Change Fund and the Least Developed Country Fund that have enabled the Global Environment Facility, as an entity entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanism of the Convention, to mobilize the resources to make the funds operational. The decision on the Special Climate Change Fund has identified two initial eligible activities: adaptation and technology transfer and its associated capacity-building. Further discussions on this issue are to be held at the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties. With regard to the Least Developed Country Fund, a decision adopted will make it possible to finance the implementation of national adaptation programmes of action in the least developed countries. The European Community and its member States, Canada, Iceland, New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland renewed an earlier pledge to contribute $US 40 million annually to developing countries through these funds, and other avenues.

7. The implementation of the Convention continues, with 108 of 148 developing countries having submitted their initial national communications. Several developing countries have also submitted their second national communications and others have begun work on them. Information provided by industrialized countries, summarized by the secretariat in its compilation and synthesis report, noted that the aggregate greenhouse gas emissions of industrialized countries in 2000 were below 1990 levels, largely because of the decrease in emissions from countries with economies in transition. Greenhouse gas projections provided by industrialized countries indicated that, in the absence of additional measures, the aggregate emissions of these countries, including emissions of countries with economies in transition, are expected to increase in the period 2000-2010. The Conference concluded that further action was needed by industrialized countries to implement policies and measures that would contribute to modifying longer-term trends in anthropogenic emissions, consistent with the objective of the Convention and the commitments of these countries, and strongly urged them to intensify their efforts to that end.

8. The high-level political debate held during the Conference took the form of three round-table discussions among ministers and other heads of delegations. The round-table discussions focused on a range of topics, such as adaptation, mitigation, sustainable development, technology and assessment of progress. At these discussions, many ministers emphasized that climate change remained the most important global challenge for humanity and that its adverse effects are already a reality in all parts of the world. It was recognized that implementation of mitigation and adaptation measures involves synergy and complementarity among economic growth, equity, poverty alleviation and environmental protection. The increasing demand for adaptation measures was noted, along with the need to improve knowledge about the vulnerability of societies and the means of mainstreaming adaptation measures into existing development planning. In this context, increasing the capacity of local communities was reiterated, and it was acknowledged that scarcity of resources hampers the capacity of countries to address climate change adequately.

9. Many ministers emphasized that the Kyoto Protocol represents a significant first step towards realizing the Convention's goal of stabilizing atmospheric levels, of greenhouse gases at safe levels, and called for its immediate entry into force. It was pointed out that the Protocol was already changing the way we think about climate, energy and investment.

10. Ministers discussed the question of how best to make use of existing technology while at the same time facilitating technology innovation, development and diffusion in the context of sustainable development. It was noted by many ministers that economic growth and climate change policies are compatible and if action were taken to introduce technologies, such as renewable energy and energy conservation, into the market, economic gains can be made. Implementing measures, such as energy-efficiency projects, introduction of renewable energy sources and development of new technologies, for example, hydrogen-related technologies and carbon capture and storage technologies, can help to decouple economic growth and the growth in emissions, in addition to achieving social and environmental benefits. The importance of adaptation technologies in areas such as agriculture, water, coastal zones and public health was highlighted. Intensified North-South and regional cooperation, for example, in technology research and cleaner production, was stressed.

11. The catalytic role of Governments in promoting research and development and of private sector investment was noted. So too, was choosing the best available technologies for the huge investments in electricity production that must be made over the coming two decades. The importance of institutional cooperation at the national level and the involvement of civil society was acknowledged.

12. The programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005 was adopted. It includes an interim allocation to carry out activities relating to the Kyoto Protocol, which is to be added to the programme budget upon the entry force of the Protocol.

13. A number of side events, involving intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, industry, academics and indigenous peoples, presented ongoing projects and academic studies, including those on the global earth observation system and the future of international climate policy.

Notes

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[2] FCCC/CP/1997/7/Add.1, decision 1/CP.3, annex.

[3] See FCCC/CP/2001/13/Add.1.

II. Report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, on the implementation of the Convention

A. Introduction

1. In its resolution 58/242 of 23 December 2003, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its fifty-ninth session on the implementation of resolution, concerning the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.[1] The Assembly expressed its deep appreciation and gratitude to the Government of Cuba for hosting the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in Havana, from 25 August to 5 September 2003.

2. The Assembly welcomed the decision of the Conference of the Parties, at its sixth session, to accept the Global Environment Facility as a financial mechanism of the Convention. It also welcomed the decision of the Council of the Global Environment Facility at its meeting held in Washington, D.C., from 14 to 16 May 2003, to establish a new operational programme on sustainable land management and, in that regard, urged the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with the Managing Director of the Global Mechanism, to consult with the Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Global Environment Facility, with a view to preparing and agreeing upon a memorandum of understanding, as mandated by the Conference of the Parties, for consideration and adoption by the Conference and the Council.

3. The sixth session of the Conference of the Parties was officially opened in Havana on 25 August 2003, and a senior United Nations official attended the opening ceremony and the high-level segment, in which 13 heads of States and Government and more than 100 ministers took part. The important decisions adopted by the Conference advance the effective and timely implementation of the Convention.

B. Implementation of General Assembly resolution 58/242

4. The Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention held its second session in Havana from 26 to 29 August 2003, during the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties.

1. Review of the implementation of the Convention and of its institutional arrangements, pursuant to article 22, paragraphs 2 (a) and (b), and article 26 of the Convention

5. The Committee was established by the Conference of the Parties at its fifth session, as a standing subsidiary body to assist it in its function of reviewing the implementation of the Convention. With regard to the review process, it is important to recall that the Conference, in decision 11/COP.1,[2] outlined the specific objectives of the procedures for the communication of information and review of implementation, and defined the format of reports on the implementation of the Convention to be submitted to it. In this regard, it was decided that, after the sixth

session of the Conference, the review should be conducted in accordance with the timetable outlined in paragraphs 13 to 15 of decision 11/COP.1, that it should continue to focus on specific thematic issues identified by parties, and that it should consider the strategic priority areas identified in the Bonn Declaration.[3]

6. At its second session, the Committee conducted an extensive assessment of the further steps to be taken in the implementation of the Convention and made several recommendations on major issues, such as resource mobilization, including coordination and partnership agreements, rehabilitation of degraded lands, promotion of private sector and economic opportunities in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid regions and countries, capacity-building, including in the area of participatory processes, legislative and institutional frameworks and promotion of synergies, monitoring and assessment, including the improvement of the reporting process, awareness-raising, information and communication. It also articulated the respective roles of the secretariat and of the Global Mechanism.

7. At its seventh session, currently scheduled to be held in Bonn, Germany, from 17 to 28 October 2005, the Conference of the Parties will review the terms of reference of the Committee, its operations and its schedule of meetings, with a view to making any necessary modification, including reconsideration of the need for and modalities of the Committee as a subsidiary body. The review will be based on such considerations as relevance, impact, effectiveness, appropriateness of format and cost-effectiveness. Parties were invited to submit their views on this question by 1 January 2005 and, with the aim of facilitating the review, the Executive Secretary was requested to prepare a report based on the views received and to submit it to the Conference at its seventh session.

8. Other important decisions were taken by the Committee on Science and Technology which held its sixth session in Havana, from 26 to 28 August 2003. The Committee reviewed its work and agreed on decisions to enhance its contribution to the implementation of the Convention in the areas of the roster of independent experts, survey and evaluation of existing networks, institutions, agencies and bodies, traditional knowledge, benchmarks and indicators, early warning systems, land degradation assessment in dry lands and the millennium ecosystem assessment. The Committee also agreed on its programme of work, which will include a priority issue on an integrated approach to land degradation vulnerability and rehabilitation.

2. Collaboration with the Global Environment Facility

9. By resolution 58/242, the General Assembly welcomed the decision of the Council of the Global Environment Facility to establish a new operational programme on sustainable land management. Furthermore, the Assembly welcomed the decision of the Conference of the Parties to accept the Facility as a financial mechanism of the Convention, pursuant to article 21 of the Convention and, in that regard, urged the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with the Managing Director of the Global Mechanism, to consult with the Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Facility, with a view to preparing and agreeing upon a memorandum of understanding for consideration and adoption by the Conference and the Council.

10. The Executive Secretary and the Managing Director of the Global Mechanism have consulted on the draft memorandum, which was sent to the secretariat of the Global Environment Facility for consideration. At the session of the Council of the Facility held in Washington, D.C., in November 2003, the Chief Executive Officer

was requested to submit to it a draft memorandum for review and comment in sufficient time that its views may be reflected in the draft memorandum to be presented to the Conference at its seventh session, in 2005. At its meeting in May 2004, the Council of the Facility focused on coherence and implementation in regard to the allocation of resources for land degradation projects.

11. Since becoming a financial mechanism of the Convention, the Facility has invested itself in supporting the implementation of the Convention, in particular with regard to the capacity-building component of national reports. In this respect, a medium-sized project has been developed by the World Bank to support the preparation of the national reports from Africa to be presented to the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention at its third session.

3. Consideration of the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development relevant to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

12. In paragraph 7 (l) of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,[4] the Convention to Combat Desertification is acknowledged as one of the tools for poverty eradication. At its sixth session, the Conference of the Parties welcomed that recognition, underlined the importance of the implementation of the Convention for meeting the Millennium Development Goals and urged all development partners to make use of the Convention in their strategies to achieve them. Parties were also encouraged to ensure good linkages between the follow-up to the Summit, in particular the work being done by the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Convention.

13. In that regard, the secretariat of the Convention, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme, the Global Environment Facility, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Bank, organized on 30 April 2004, during the twelfth session of the Commission, a side-event on the interlinkages among drought, desertification and water. The event was co-chaired by Luc-Marie Gnacadja, Minister of Environment, Housing and Urban Development of Benin and Olav Kjorven, State Secretary of International Development of Norway. The discussion covered various issues, such as Convention synergies, drought management, governance, rural land use practices, the integration of drought mitigation into investment planning and science and technology for drought mitigation.

4. Synergies with other relevant Conventions, and organizations

14. By decision 12/COP.6,[5] the Conference of the Parties reviewed activities for the promotion and strengthening of relationships with other relevant conventions and relevant international organizations, institutions and agencies. In that regard, it was noted that synergies with the Rio conventions had been strengthened through the work of the Joint Liaison Group. The Conference underlined the importance of the collaboration between those Conventions and the United Nations Forum on Forests in promoting activities in the low forest cover countries to combat desertification, land degradation and deforestation.

15. The secretariats of the Convention to Combat Desertification and the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (more commonly known as the Ramsar Convention)[6] have continued to hold

periodic consultations with a view to putting into operation their joint memorandum of understanding through collaborative ventures, in particular at the national and local levels. Finally, the secretariat of the Convention to Combat Desertification has concluded a memorandum of understanding with the secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals in regard to joint activities.

5. Commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the Convention

16. The tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention to Combat Desertification was celebrated on 17 June 2004. On that occasion, the secretariat organized two major activities, on raising global awareness of desertification and at the same time marking the presence of this United Nations agency at its headquarters location in Bonn, Germany.

17. To mark the tenth anniversary, the secretariat also produced a 20-page commemorative publication highlighting the work of the Convention since its inception. Entitled *Preserving our Common Ground: UNCCD Ten Years On*, the publication encompasses a range of articles representing themes strategic to the Convention process. The main article, "Securing a global common good", exemplifies the Convention as a potential tool yet to be fully utilized to address acute social, economic and political issues linked to the effects of desertification and drought. Insight is also provided on organs vital to the Convention's efficacy, such as the Global Environment Facility and the Global Mechanism.

C. Action requested by the General Assembly

18. In paragraph 18 of its resolution 57/259, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to its fifty-eighth session on the implementation of the resolution. The present report has been produced in response to that request.

19. As underlined by the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Convention to Combat Desertification constitutes a major international instrument which can contribute to poverty eradication. Its timely and effective implementation would help in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, since most poverty and hunger is concentrated in rural, dry and degraded lands. The Assembly may wish to emphasize that aspect as we are fast approaching the first review of the progress made in that respect.

20. Desertification contributes to food insecurity, famine and poverty, and can give rise to social, economic and political tensions that can cause conflicts. It is a serious obstacle to sustainable development. The Assembly may therefore reaffirm that aspect and invite all stakeholders, in particular the developed ones, to take concrete measures aimed at using the Convention as an instrument to achieve the objectives of sustainable development, in particular with regard to its environmental pillar.

21. The Convention has entered into its implementation phase. Despite access to the Global Environment Facility's resources, there is a need for more funding efforts as the needs in addressing land degradation remain huge. The Assembly may wish to call for more funding from various sources. It may also wish to call upon the forthcoming fourth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund to

increase substantially the level of resources allocated to the implementation of the Convention in the light of the demonstrated need.

22. The Assembly may further wish to reiterate its appeal to the parties to the Convention to pay their contributions to the core budget, which are due to be paid promptly every 1 January, and which continue to provide the resources for conference services.

Notes

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

[2] See ICCD/COP(1)/11/Add.1.

[3] See ICCD/COP(4)/11/Add.1, decision 8/COP.4.

[4] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

[5] See ICCD/COP(6)/11/Add.1.

[6] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 996, No. 14583.

III. Report of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity

A. Introduction

1. In paragraph 15 of its resolution 58/212 of 23 December 2003, the General Assembly invited the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity[1] to continue reporting to it on ongoing work regarding the Convention, including its Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.[2]

2. Since the most recent report of the Executive Secretary to the General Assembly (A/58/191), the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention was held in Kuala Lumpur from 9 to 20 and on 27 February 2004. The first meeting of the Conference serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety was held at the same venue, from 23 to 27 February 2004.

3. The reports of the two meetings (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/21 and UNEP/CBD/COP-MOP/1/15), together with lists of participants and pre-session documentation, have been made available to all Governments, and are available at the secretariat's web site, http://www.biodiv.org. Section B below provides an overview of the Conference and the Meeting, focusing on follow-up action to the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.[3] Section C highlights a number of issues of direct relevance to the work of the Assembly.

4. As at 10 June 2004, there were 188 parties to the Convention. The Cartagena Protocol entered into force on 11 September 2003. As at 10 June 2004, 100 countries had ratified the Protocol.

B. Overview of the outcomes of the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties and the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol

1. Outcome of the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties

5. The seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties was attended by some 2,300 participants, representing some 162 Governments and 394 organizations, including United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations, indigenous communities, academia and industry. A high-level ministerial segment adopted the Kuala Lumpur Ministerial Declaration.

6. At its first meeting since the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Conference had the important task of translating the biodiversity-related commitments of the Summit into concrete measures. These commitments include the target of significantly reducing the current rate of biodiversity loss by 2010, the negotiation of an international regime on access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing, and the establishment of ecological networks and corridors.

7. In the Convention's Strategic Plan,[4] adopted at the sixth meeting, parties committed themselves to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global regional and national levels, as a contribution to

poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on earth, an objective that was endorsed by the World Summit on Sustainable Development. At its seventh meeting, the Conference developed a framework to facilitate the assessment of progress made towards the achievement of the 2010 targets and the communication of that assessment, to promote coherence among the programmes of work of the Convention, within which national and regional targets might be set, and indicators identified. The framework covers seven focal areas: reducing the rate of loss of the components of biodiversity; promoting sustainable use of biodiversity; addressing the major threats to biodiversity; maintaining ecosystem integrity and the provision of goods and services from biodiversity in ecosystems in support of human well-being; protecting traditional knowledge, innovations and practices; ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources; and mobilizing financial and technical resources. For each of the focal areas, goals and subtargets are to be established, a set of indicators was established and others are to be identified. Within this flexible framework, the Conference invited parties and Governments to develop national and/or regional goals and targets, and, as appropriate, to incorporate them into relevant plans, programmes and initiatives, including national biodiversity strategies and action plans (decision VII/30).

8. The seventh meeting also further reinforced the shift, already evident at the fifth and sixth meetings held in 2000 and 2002, respectively, from policy development to implementation. The decisions on thematic and cross-cutting programmes of work set clear outcome-oriented targets and either established or called for the development and incorporation of indicators for measuring progress. The multi-year programme of work of the Conference up to 2010 focuses primarily on the evaluation of progress made in or in supporting implementation. At each of its meetings up to 2010, a central objective of the Conference will be to assess the state of progress made, including obstacles, in achieving the goals of the Strategic Plan and the progress made towards the achievement of the 2010 target and relevant Millennium Development Goals. In this regard, the Conference of the Parties established an ad hoc open-ended working group on the review of the implementation of the Convention to consider the progress made in implementation and the Strategic Plan.

9. Emphasizing the role of the Convention as the key international instrument for the integration of biodiversity-related issues into the Millennium development agenda and for the achievement of its goals, the Conference, at its seventh meeting, sought to articulate and integrate in each of its work programmes the links between biodiversity, the Millennium Development Goals and poverty eradication.

10. The Conference decided that, when undertaking in-depth reviews of the existing thematic areas and cross-cutting issues under the Convention on Biological Diversity, items identified as priorities by the World Summit on Sustainable Development should be considered in relation to the existing programmes of work. It also decided that, for each upcoming meeting, appropriate ways to address — including within the ministerial segment — issues of overarching importance, in particular the relevant socio-economic issues identified by the Summit, should be identified.

11. The Conference adopted new programmes of work in the areas of mountain biological diversity, protected areas, and technology transfer and cooperation (decisions VII/27, VII/28 and VII/29), and revised and expanded the existing

programmes of work on inland water ecosystems, and marine and coastal biological diversity (decisions VII/4 and VII/5). In the new multi-year programme of work, island biodiversity will be an issue for in-depth consideration at the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. In this regard, the Executive Secretary was mandated to develop a preparatory process for the work of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice on the issue, inter alia, drawing on the outcome the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, to be held in Port Louis, Mauritius, from 10 to 14 January 2005.

12. The programme of work on protected areas provides an important framework for the implementation of relevant commitments made at the World Summit and the output of the fifth World Parks Congress, convened by the World Conservation Union in September 2003. Its overall objective is the establishment and maintenance, by 2010 for terrestrial and by 2012 for marine areas, of comprehensive, effectively managed and ecologically representative national and regional systems of protected areas.

13. In adopting the programme of work on technology transfer and cooperation, the Conference of the Parties sought to ensure that parties have, inter alia, the technological capacity to implement the Convention in line with the goals of the Strategic Plan and the commitments of Governments in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit. The programme of work provides for technology assessments; the development of national, regional and international systems for the gathering and dissemination of relevant information on technology transfer and cooperation; the establishment of an enabling administrative, legislative and policy environment; and the building or enhancement of technical, scientific, institutional and administrative capacity.

14. Pursuant to paragraph 44 (o) of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit, subsequently reaffirmed by the General Assembly in its resolutions 57/260 of 20 December 2002 and 58/212, the Conference of the Parties decided to mandate the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing to negotiate an international regime on access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing. It adopted broad terms of reference for the Working Group, thereby maintaining an important level of flexibility regarding the nature, scope and elements of the instrument or instruments to be developed. The Working Group will meet twice during the intersessional period between the seventh and eighth meetings of the Conference.

15. At its seventh meeting, the Conference also adopted guidelines on key issues: the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity; [5] the Akwé: Kon Voluntary Guidelines for the Conduct of Cultural, Environmental and Social Impact Assessments regarding Developments Proposed to Take Place on, or which are Likely to Impact on, Sacred Sites and on Lands and Waters Traditionally Occupied or Used by Indigenous and Local Communities; [6] and the Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development.[7] Such guiding principles and guidelines represent international consensus on appropriate measures for the implementation of the provisions of the Convention and provide useful guidance to parties regarding action at the national and regional levels.

16. Taken as a whole, the decisions adopted by the Conference at its seventh meeting underline the determination of parties to put in place concrete measures to

facilitate progress towards the achievement of the 2010 target and the realization of the three objectives of the Convention. They also reaffirm their commitment to the Convention's lead role in international biodiversity issues and its significant contributions to the global sustainable development agenda.

2. Outcome of the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

17. The first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety was attended by 895 participants from 79 parties, 76 non-party States and 158 organizations, including United Nations bodies and agencies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, indigenous and local communities, industry and academia. The Meeting successfully met the double challenge of establishing an operational framework for the effective implementation of the Protocol and the processes required for the further development of some of its provisions.

18. Since effective and timely decision-making by parties of import is critical and central to the smooth operation of the Protocol, the Meeting established procedures and mechanisms designed to facilitate decision-making by parties of import, especially those encountering difficulties in the decision-making process. In decision BS-I/2, the Meeting emphasized that, in facilitating decision-making, priority should be given to the capacity-building of developing country parties and parties with economies in transition. It further underlined the need for cooperation among parties to ensure that they have access to the Biosafety Clearing House and the information it houses. In decision BS-I/3, on information-sharing and the Biosafety Clearing House, the Meeting defined the modalities of operation of the Biosafety Clearing House and encouraged parties, Governments and other users to develop national, regional, subregional and institutional nodes that are interlinked with the central portal.

19. With regard to handling, transport, packaging and identification of living modified organisms, the Meeting, by decision BS-I/6, adopted interim measures regarding documentation requirements for living modified organisms intended for direct use as food or feed, or for processing, pending the adoption of detailed requirements at the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, to be held in the first half of 2005. The Meeting established an open-ended expert group on identification requirements to assist it in taking a decision. As regards living modified organisms for contained use and for direct introduction into the environment, the Meeting specified the information requirements for accompanying documentation and recommended specific formats for such documentation.

20. The Meeting considered capacity-building for developing country parties and parties with economies in transition as a crucial element in the effective implementation of the Protocol. In this regard, it established a voluntary fund for the use of the roster of experts on biosafety; called for a coordinated approach towards capacity-building at all levels in order to develop possible synergies and promote partnerships among different capacity-building efforts and funding initiatives; and adopted the Action Plan for Building Capacities for Effective Implementation of the Protocol together with a set of indicators for monitoring its implementation (see decisions BS-I/4 and BS-I/5).

21. By decision BS-I/8, the Meeting adopted procedures and mechanisms to promote compliance with the provisions of the Protocol, to address cases of non-compliance by parties, and to provide advice or assistance to those parties having difficulties. In cases of non-compliance, a compliance committee is to take the necessary measures, taking into account the capacity of the party concerned to comply and such factors as the cause, type, degree and frequency of non-compliance. In addition, the Meeting established an open-ended ad hoc working group of experts to elaborate international rules and procedures regarding liability and redress for damage resulting from the transboundary movements of living modified organisms.

C. Outcomes of special interest to the General Assembly

22. The Conference of the Parties, at its seventh meeting, adopted a number of decisions of special interest to the Assembly. These decisions either address broader issues under consideration by the Assembly or require some action by the General Assembly or other organizations of the United Nations system.

1. 2010 biodiversity target and the Millennium Development Goals

23. The Conference noted that: the Millennium Development Goals provide the framework for the entire United Nations system to work coherently towards the tasks of combating poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women; the achievement of the Goals are dependent on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity; and if development activities were not undertaken in a manner consistent with the objectives of the Convention, they may further degrade biodiversity, undermine sustainability and hence limit achievement of the Goals. Thus, the Conference urged parties, Governments, international financial institutions, donors and relevant intergovernmental organizations, as a contribution towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, to implement development activities in ways that are consistent with and do not compromise the achievement of the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the 2010 target.

24. In addition, the Conference requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To work closely with the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Millennium Project of the Secretary-General and others to find ways to communicate more effectively the importance of biodiversity in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and to identify and communicate the relationship between biodiversity and human development targets at all levels;

(b) To explore with the Secretary-General the possibility of establishing the 2010 target as an interim milestone in achieving Millennium Development Goal 7, of ensuring environmental sustainability by 2015;

(c) To find ways to use the 2010 targets and indicators[8] to help achieve target 9 (reverse the loss of environmental resources) of Millennium Development Goal 7 and the other relevant Millennium Development Goals, in particular Goal 1, of halving poverty and hunger, and those relating to health.

2. Cooperation with other conventions and international organizations

25. With regard to the issue of cooperation with other conventions and international organizations, the Conference, in its decision VII/26, welcomed the support of the General Assembly, in its resolution 58/212, for the ongoing work of the liaison group of the secretariats and the relevant subsidiary bodies of the Framework Convention, the Convention to Combat Desertification and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

26. In this context, the Conference urged further enhanced cooperation with relevant international conventions, organizations and bodies, strengthening and building upon existing cooperative arrangements to enhance synergies and reduce inefficiencies, governance arrangements and agreed programmes, within existing resources. Specifically, it requested the Executive Secretary to invite the secretariats of the other four biodiversity-related conventions (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora; Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat, more commonly known as the Ramsar Convention;[9] Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals; and World Heritage Convention) to form a liaison group to enhance coherence and cooperation in their implementation.

27. The Conference also requested the Executive Secretary, in close collaboration with relevant conventions, organizations and bodies, to examine options for establishing a flexible framework among all relevant actors, such as a global partnership on biodiversity.

3. Oceans and the law of the sea

28. The elaborated programme of work on marine and coastal biological diversity incorporates relevant activities from the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit. A number of paragraphs in Conference decision VII/5, which relate to conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in marine areas beyond national jurisdiction, including marine protected areas beyond national jurisdiction and deep seabed genetic resources, are directly addressed to the General Assembly.

29. Recalling paragraphs 51 and 52 of Assembly resolution 58/240 of 23 December 2003, as well as paragraphs 32 (a) and (c) of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit, the Conference expressed concern about the serious threats to the biological diversity in marine areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, in particular areas with seamounts, hydrothermal vents and cold-water corals, other vulnerable ecosystems and certain other underwater features, resulting from the processes and activities being carried out in such areas, and stressed the need for rapid action to address those threats on the basis of the precautionary approach and the ecosystem approach.

30. The Conference of the Parties called upon the Assembly and relevant international and regional organizations, in accordance with their mandate and rules of procedure, to take urgently the necessary short, medium and long-term measures to eliminate or avoid destructive practices, consistent with international law, on a scientific basis, including the application of precaution; for example, consideration on a case-by-case basis, of the interim prohibition of destructive practices adversely impacting upon the marine biological diversity associated with the areas identified

above. The Conference of the Parties also recommended Parties to take urgently the necessary responsive measures.

31. With regard to marine protected areas in areas beyond national jurisdiction, the Conference, in the same decision, noted that these were extremely deficient in purpose, numbers and coverage and agreed on the urgent need for international cooperation and action to improve conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in marine areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, including the establishment of further marine protected areas consistent with international law, and based on scientific information, including areas such as seamounts, hydrothermal vents, cold-water corals and other vulnerable ecosystems.

32. Further, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to urgently collaborate with the Secretary-General of the United Nations and relevant international and regional bodies in accordance with their mandates and their rules of procedure on the preparation of the report called for in General Assembly resolution 58/240, paragraph 52, and to support any work of the Assembly in identifying appropriate mechanisms for the future establishment and effective management of marine protected areas beyond national jurisdiction. Regarding the conservation and sustainable use of deep seabed genetic resources beyond national jurisdiction, the Conference welcomed Assembly resolution 58/240 and invited parties to raise their concerns regarding this issue at the Assembly's fifty-ninth session. It invited the Assembly to further coordinate work relating to conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources of the deep seabed beyond the limits of national jurisdiction.

33. In addition, the Conference requested the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the International Seabed Authority and in collaboration with the international organizations, such as the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the United Nations Environment Programme and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization, if appropriate, to compile information on the methods for the identification, assessment and monitoring of genetic resources of the seabed and ocean floor and subsoil thereof, in areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, and to compile and synthesize information on their status and trends, including identification of threats to such genetic resources and the technical options for their protection.

4. Island biodiversity

34. In accordance with the multi-year programme of work and as called for in the strategy paper adopted by the Interregional Preparatory Meeting for the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in Nassau from 26 to 30 January 2004, the Conference of the Parties, by decision VII/31, decided to establish a new programme of work on island biodiversity.

35. The above underscores the need for General Assembly support to the work of the Convention in specific areas through policy follow-up to facilitate enhanced coordination and cooperative arrangements and to develop synergies and complementarities. It also underlines the role of the Convention and its Protocol on Biosafety as key instruments in addressing issues of concern to the Assembly.

D. Conclusions and recommendations

36. The General Assembly, at its fifty-ninth session, may wish to, inter alia:

(a) Take note of the report of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, as transmitted by the Secretary-General to the Assembly at its fifty-ninth session;

(b) Note the outcome of the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the shift from policy development to implementation;

(c) Also note the outcome of the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol;

(d) Welcome the offer of the Government of Brazil to host both the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the third meeting of Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol in the first half of 2006;

(e) Urge parties to the Convention that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Protocol to do so as soon as possible;

(f) Note the interdependence of the 2010 target in the Strategic Plan of the Convention and the Millennium Development Goals, and the relevance of the biodiversity indicators adopted by the Conference at its seventh meeting for target 9 (reverse the loss of environmental resources) of Millennium Development Goal 7 (ensure environmental sustainability);

(g) Urge parties to the Convention and other Governments to take the necessary measures to achieve, by 2010, a significant reduction in the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national levels as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to benefit all life on earth;

(h) Consider any further action needed with respect to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in marine areas beyond national jurisdiction, including marine protected areas beyond national jurisdiction and deep seabed genetic resources;

(i) Welcome the steps taken by the Convention on Biological Diversity to promote closer collaboration with other conventions and international organizations;

(j) Invite the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity to continue to report to the Assembly on the ongoing work regarding the Convention and its Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

Notes

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1760, No. 30619.

[2] See UNEP/CBD/ExCOP/1/3 and Corr.1, part two, annex.

[3] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

[4] UNEP/CBD/COP/6/20, annex I, decision VI/26.

[5] Conference decision VII/12, annex II.

[6] Conference decision VII/16, annex.

[7] Conference decision VII/14, annex.

[8] In Conference decision VII/30, Goals, sub-targets and indicators are identified for each of the focal areas referred to in paragraph 7 of the present report. The indicators for immediate testing are: trends in extent of selected biomes, ecosystems and habitats; trends in abundance and distribution of selected species; coverage of protected areas; nitrogen deposition; marine trophic index; water quality in aquatic ecosystems; status and trends of linguistic diversity and numbers of speakers of indigenous languages; official development assistance provided in support of the Convention. Other indicators are under development.

[9] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 996, No. 14583.

IV. Cooperative and joint activities of the conventions

A. Introduction

1. The conferences of the parties to the three conventions discussed in the present report and their subsidiary bodies have, over the years, underlined the need for cooperation and the development and enhancement of synergies and complementarities among the conventions at international, national and local levels.[1] The rationale for collaboration among the conventions stems from the interlinkages among the issues that they address.[2]

2. To facilitate coordination among the conventions, a Joint Liaison Group has been established, comprising the executive secretaries and the chairs of the subsidiary bodies of each of the conventions.

3. The General Assembly further encouraged this cooperation and, by resolution 57/260 of 20 December 2002 and 58/212 of 23 December 2003, welcomed the establishment of the Group and took note of its ongoing work.

4. The Joint Liaison Group held its fifth meeting in January 2004 and: (a) reviewed the progress made in cooperative and joint activities and (b) agreed to prepare a joint paper on options for enhanced cooperation, which would be presented to the relevant bodies of each of the conventions. These issues are addressed in sections B and C below.

B. Recent cooperative activities of the secretariats of the three conventions

5. The secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in cooperation with other convention secretariats, organized a workshop in Espoo, Finland, in July 2003, with the aim of enhancing collaboration and of examining synergy among the conventions. Participants included national focal points of all three conventions. The workshop identified a number of options for cooperation in the exchange of information, of transfer of technology, education and outreach, research and systematic observation, capacity-building, reporting, and climate change impacts and adaptation. The workshop highlighted a number of other options, for example, the use of the ecosystem approach as a framework for activities contributing to the objectives of the three conventions.[3]

6. The secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, together with the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and in collaboration with the secretariat of the Framework Convention, organized a workshop in Viterbo, Italy, in April 2004 on promoting synergy among the three conventions in regard to forests and forest ecosystems. In addition, the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, in collaboration with the Executive Secretary of the Convention to Combat Desertification, is planning to convene a workshop on practicing synergy, for national focal points of the relevant conventions and Global Environment Facility from Africa, and has invited the secretariat of the Framework Convention to participate actively in the planning process.

7. A joint programme of work has been developed by the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification on the biodiversity of dry and sub-humid lands. The programme highlights specific areas of collaboration and joint action among the respective secretariats, national focal points and other collaborating partners. This development was welcomed by the conferences of the parties to both conventions.[4]

8. A report entitled *Interlinkages Between Biological Diversity and Climate Change: Advice on the Integration of Biodiversity Considerations into the Implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol*[5] was prepared by the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Biodiversity and Climate Change established by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in collaboration with the secretariat of the Framework Convention and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The report was welcomed by the scientific subsidiary bodies of the two conventions. The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention encouraged parties to the Convention to make use of the report for national purposes.

9. The secretariats are developing common web-based tools to facilitate access to national reports and communications for the three conventions and to information on national focal points. The three secretariats also maintain a joint web-calendar of activities relevant to the three conventions and are developing a joint photographic calendar for 2005, as well as a brochure on the three conventions.

10. On the margins of the fifth meeting of the Joint Liaison Group, a retreat with the Chairman/Chief Executive Officer and senior staff of the Global Environment Facility was held to discuss common issues in relation to adaptation to climate change, the transfer of technology, and capacity-building and development.

11. The three executive secretaries have written jointly to the Chair of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development to express their appreciation for the work done so far on the "Rio markers"[6] and to request the integration of the markers in the regular creditor reporting system in order to facilitate the identification of official development assistance funding allocated to the implementation of each of the conventions.

12. The secretariats are also sharing information and providing input to the Group on Earth Observations.

C. Promoting further enhanced collaboration among the conventions

13. The Conference of the Parties and/or the respective subsidiary bodies of each convention called upon the Joint Liaison Group to explore options for further cooperation among the three conventions.[7]

14. The Conference of the Parties and the subsidiary bodies of each of the conventions have also provided guidance that promotes complementarity among the national biodiversity strategies and action plans, the national action programmes of the Convention to Combat Desertification and the national communications and national adaptation programmes of action of the Framework Convention,[8] and collaboration among the scientific subsidiary bodies[9] and the respective national focal points.[10]

15. These modalities and other options for enhanced cooperation will be addressed in the options paper to be prepared by the three secretariats, as suggested by the Joint Liaison Group in line with the decisions of the respective conferences of the parties and their subsidiary bodies. The options will be presented to the relevant convention bodies for their consideration.

Notes

[1] Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity decision VI/20; Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change decision 13/CP.8; Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification decision 12/COP.6. In the case of the latter Convention, encouragement of coordination of activities among the three conventions is built into the text of the Convention itself (art. 8.1).

[2] A number of studies have highlighted the potential for synergy among the conventions, for example: interlinkage studies of the World Bank (see *Protecting Our Planet — Securing Our Future: Linkages among Global Environmental Issues and Human Needs*, Robert T. Watson et al., 1998); United Nations University, *Interlinkages: Synergies and Coordination between Multilateral Environmental Agreements*, Report of the International Conference, Tokyo 14-16 July 1999); United Nations Development Programme, "Report of the Expert Meeting on Synergies among the Conventions on Biodiversity, Climate Change, Combating Desertification and the Forest Principles, Sede Boqer, Israel, 17-20 March 1997"; and Global Environment Facility, Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel, "Interlinkages between the GEF focal areas: a report focusing on the needs of the GEF", 2004.

[3] The report of the workshop is contained in FCCC/SB/2003/1.

[4] Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification decision 12/COP.6 and Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity decision VII/2.

[5] Convention on Biological Diversity, Technical Series No. 10, 2003.

[6] The "Rio markers" developed by the Development Assistance Committee permit the specific identification of activities targeting the objectives of the Rio conventions which, to a large extent, fall under the definition of aid to environment.

[7] FCCC/SBSTA/2001/2, para. 42 (d); FCCC/SBSTA/2003/15, para. 44 (e); Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity decision VII/15; and Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification decision 12/COP.6.

[8] Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change decision 28/CP.7, annex, "Guidelines for the preparation of national adaptation programmes of action" (see FCCC/CP/2001/13/Add.4); and Convention on Biological Diversity, Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice recommendation VIII/4.

[9] Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change decision 13/CP.8, para. 2 (see FCCC/CP/2002/7/Add.1).

[10] See FCCC/SBSTA/2003/15, para. 44 (d), and para. 3 of decision VII/15 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (see UNEP/CBD/COP/7/21).

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Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and of the twenty-fifth special session of the General Assembly

Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Governments have continued to increase their support to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation and to the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund, set up within the framework of the Special Human Settlements Programme for the Palestinian people. The United Nations Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) Global Urban Observatory has been strengthened as a worldwide monitoring and learning network, in response to demand-based national and local initiatives, in order to assist countries and cities in collecting, analysing and using urban indicators and statistical data. In its shelter and sustainable human settlements development, disaster mitigation and rehabilitation activities, UN-Habitat has continued to strengthen its cooperation and collaboration within the United Nations system, with women, young people, local authorities and all other Habitat Agenda partners.

The activities of UN-Habitat and the World Bank in the Cities Alliance have significantly contributed to improved collaboration between the two organizations and other Alliance members and have also placed the issue of urban poverty and slums on the international agenda. Although a number of Governments have included shelter and urbanization issues in their national development strategies, the link between sustainable urbanization policies and poverty reduction strategies remains to be clarified and strengthened in many developing countries. The report concludes with a set of recommendations.

* A/59/150.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 58/226 of 23 December 2003, entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and the strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)".

II. Progress made in the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)

A. Funding

2. On the whole, Governments have responded quite positively to calls for increased contributions during the 2002-2003 biennium. General-purpose funds from Governments rose from US$ 6 million in 2002 to US$ 8.3 million in 2003, while special-purpose contributions from Governments and other donors increased from US$ 30 million in 2002 to US$ 37.8 million in 2003. The main concern is that special-purpose contributions remain at a considerably higher level than general-purpose contributions, making it difficult for UN-Habitat to plan its financial commitments and implement its work programme around strategically focused goals.

3. Since 60 per cent of the general-purpose contributions come from four countries, a vigorous campaign has been launched to widen the donor base. The Executive Director appealed to member States for multi-year funding, to enable more effective support of programme implementation. There are promising signs, with commitments of $Can 15 million from Canada and NKr 10 million from Norway towards the Water and Sanitation Trust Fund to support developing countries in achieving goal 7 (targets 10 and 11) of the Millennium Development Goals. In addition, UN-Habitat and the Asian Development Bank in March 2003 signed a memorandum of understanding under which they will provide US$ 10 million in capacity-building grants to Asian cities, to be followed by US$ 500 million in loans for pro-poor investments in water and sanitation through the Water for Asian Cities Programme. UN-Habitat is also developing the slum upgrading facility as an innovative way of raising funds for upgrading slums and for other human settlements activities while also strengthening the Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation.

4. In its resolution 2003/62 of 25 July 2003, the Economic and Social Council welcomed resolution 19/18 of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat,[1] in which the Governing Council endorsed the establishment of the Special Human Settlements Programme for the Palestinian people and the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund of US$ 5 million for an initial period of two years. The Council also urged the international donor community and all financial institutions to support UN-Habitat in the immediate mobilization of financial resources for the establishment and operation of the Programme and the Fund. The Programme Coordinator assumed his duties on 1 March 2004 and began the implementation of the Programme with a programme definition phase (March 2004 to December 2004), which involves consultations with the Palestinian Authority, bilateral donors and inter-agency

consultations, fund-raising for the Fund, assessment of existing conditions in the occupied Palestinian territory and formulation of programme elements. Steps are being taken to appoint a chief technical adviser in Jerusalem and a UN-Habitat programme manager in Gaza to assist the Coordinator in implementing the Programme. To date, contributions to the fund have been made by the United States of America (US$ 500,000) and Sweden (US$ 275,000).

5. As an interim step, and in an effort to further strengthen and improve the delivery of necessary services by the United Nations Office at Nairobi, 17 new regular budgetary posts (6 Professional and 11 Local level) were requested by the Secretary-General and subsequently approved by the General Assembly. Similarly, two new regular budgetary posts have been approved for UN-Habitat.

B. Monitoring and evaluation

6. UN-Habitat continues to provide substantive support to Governments as they establish local, national and regional urban observatories to support the development of urban policy. For that purpose, the UN-Habitat Global Urban Observatory (GUO) has been strengthened as a worldwide monitoring and learning network, with staff able to respond to demand-based national and local initiatives, in order to assist countries and cities in collecting, analysing and using urban indicators and statistical data. Activities include the building of local capacities for the use of urban indicators data and geographic information systems (GIS) technology for city planning, city management, policy-making and participatory governance.

7. Strategic partnerships for monitoring and evaluation have been developed in order to sustain this approach, internally with the Urban Management Programme, Sustainable Cities Programme and the water for African and Asian cities programmes and externally, with the Cities Alliance, the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

8. UN-Habitat is providing technical assistance to Governments on three main fronts:

(a) The Global Urban Observatory is supporting local authorities and stakeholders in undertaking urban inequities surveys and collecting urban indicators according to a global sample of cities (a set of 350 cities in the world). These standard surveys are expanded to cover any special topics of interest to the community (HIV/AIDS, domestic violence etc);

(b) Technical cooperation projects are being implemented by UN-Habitat and partners (UNDP, World Bank, Department for International Development (DFID), Cities Alliance and other multilateral and bilateral agencies). The aim is to promote the development of city performance monitoring systems (based on a mix of global and local indicators) as a foundation for city consultations, municipal reform and international donor investment programmes;

(c) Where cities and national stakeholders formulate a specific request to establish or strengthen urban observatories and local monitoring systems. Efforts are geared towards developing and implementing indicators systems for monitoring the Habitat Agenda,[2] the Millennium Development Goals and national and local development targets.

9. The expected outputs include functional national and local urban observatories, establishment of urban monitoring systems and information-based planning processes in selected cities and countries. These activities are being undertaken in conjunction with USAID household surveys (e.g., Addis Ababa, Istanbul), the ongoing urban projects of various donors (e.g., DFID India, UNDP Indonesia) and in response to requests for assistance from non-governmental organizations and local authorities (e.g., member cities of the International Metropolis project).

10. Good progress has been made in establishing joint initiatives with ongoing urban projects in Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Latvia, Mexico, South Africa and Yemen. The current portfolio consists of joint projects with UNDP, the World Bank, the Cities Alliance, DFID and the Metropolis project. Further, following the circulation of information on GUO local indicator activities within the World Bank, a number of requests for assistance were received from its regional offices in relation to the Bank's projects (China, El Salvador, Georgia, Malawi, Mexico, Peru, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania and Yemen).

11. Moreover, UN-Habitat has begun to develop a set of products that will assist local partners to develop their own performance monitoring systems, as recommended in the Habitat Agenda. Operational guidelines for municipal performance measurement have been produced jointly by UN-Habitat and the World Bank. GUO is a partner of the World Bank in China and the UN-Habitat regional office for Asia and the Pacific in the development of training resources for a distance-learning course.

12. In an effort to advance the progress of monitoring the achievement of a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers by 2020 (target 11 of Millennium Development Goal 7), UN-Habitat, in close collaboration with the Statistics Division of the United Nations Secretariat and the Cities Alliance, organized a gathering of experts and other stakeholders from around the globe to define the concept of slums and to identify related indicators. Subsequent indicator estimates for 2001 constituted the baseline for future estimates of slum-dwellers at the country level. These estimates have already served their global monitoring purpose, having been published in the UNDP *Human Development Report 2003: Millennium Development Goals — A Compact among Nations to End Human Poverty*[3] and the 2003 report of the Secretary-General on the Millennium Development Goals. They were also published in the 2003 edition of the UN-Habitat flagship report, *The Challenge of Slums: Global Report on Human Settlements*,[4] which examines the social, spatial and economic factors at all levels, from local to global, that underlie the formation and dynamics of slums.

13. Recently, a more elaborate UN-Habitat report, concerning the country-by-country distribution of slum-dwellers and its relation to the Human Development Index, entitled "Slums of the world", was published as a working paper. The report is expected to improve the coverage of country reports on the Millennium Development Goals, most of which do not deal with target 11. Moreover, in order to enable a better understanding of global slum trends and patterns for monitoring purposes, UN-Habitat has produced baseline data for 1990, using the same methodology.

14. UN-Habitat has recently introduced a programme on the monitoring of urban inequities. The main purpose of the programme is to monitor better the conditions of

the urban poor in relation to other urban residents. The overarching global goal of the programme is to influence the urban policies of Governments by providing knowledge support.

15. Another important initiative has been the initiation of an ongoing dialogue on what is entailed in the improvement of slum-dwellers' conditions. UN-Habitat, in close collaboration with the Millennium Project task force on improving the lives of slum-dwellers (Task Force 8), has organized meetings and consultations to advance the conceptual understanding of slum upgrading, including the means to measure it. As a result, consensus is reached on the scope of improvement, which includes not only the physical but also the socio-economic aspect of slum life. Based on this work, UN-Habitat is also conducting a preliminary study on costing the Millennium target, taking into account the different variables.

C. Partnerships

16. UN-Habitat has established a Partners and Youth Section to provide an integrated approach and promote cooperation with Habitat Agenda partners, including local authorities, parliamentarians, women, youth, academic community, civil society organizations and community-based organizations.

17. Over the past two years, UN-Habitat has strengthened its cooperation with non-governmental organizations within the framework of major groups and networks. While engagement with the private sector needs further strengthening, local authorities are extensively integrated in its work. The new rules of procedure, approved by the Governing Council of UN-Habitat in its resolution 19/1[1] have paved the way for enhanced engagement of local authorities in the Programme's activities. A 28-country study on the decentralization and strengthening of local authorities was carried out in 2003 as a follow-up to resolution 18/10 on the role of local authorities, adopted by the Governing Council at its eighteenth session.[1]

18. Since the adoption of the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[5] the members of the Advisory Committee of Local Authorities (ACLA) have held discussions and provided advice on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and the Millennium Development Goals at the city level. Their discussions took into consideration key issues, such as sustainable development, municipal international cooperation (city to city cooperation), urbanization and the definition of common policy positions for international events. In line with its work programme for the period 2004-2005, UN-Habitat endeavours to expand the work of ACLA and to associate the other organizations of the United Nations system which are also working with local authorities, with the activities of ACLA.

19. Cooperation and collaboration with non-governmental organizations and other Habitat Agenda partners centred on the implementation of the UN-Habitat global campaigns for security of tenure and good urban governance and on the global monitoring of urbanization trends. UN-Habitat worked closely with local authorities and their international associations during the reporting period. At the same time, technical collaboration with local authorities and their associations continued in the context of a number of UN-Habitat projects and global programmes. Global Parliamentarians on Habitat, one of its partners, held the Fourth Global Forum of Parliamentarians on Habitat in Berlin in 2003 and adopted the Berlin Declaration, which called upon Governments to increase their financial support for the

realization of the Millennium Development Goal of significantly improving the lives of 100 million slum-dwellers by the year 2020.

20. UN-Habitat worked closely with members of civil society around the world and financially supported the participation of members from the non-governmental organizations, civil society and youth organizations in the nineteenth session of the Governing Council. The forum of non-governmental organizations convened prior to the nineteenth session was attended by representatives of approximately 500 non-governmental organizations. The main aim of the forum was to promote and advocate the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and exchange experience and ideas with regard to shelter and housing development.

21. UN-Habitat is working towards increasing the number of women's organizations and women's affairs ministries working in the area of human settlement in order to meet the challenge of bringing human settlement issues into the mainstream agenda and 10-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (Beijing+10) process. To this end, UN-Habitat is working with 13 grass-roots women's organizations in East Africa to implement the women's empowerment programme, which focuses on housing development, land rights and the promotion and sale of East African handicrafts at the Universal Forum of Cultures, held in Barcelona, Spain, from 9 May to 26 September 2004. UN-Habitat also collaborated with the regional commissions and women's organizations involved in the preparations for Beijing+10.

22. A number of women's organizations in Asia participated effectively in the Asian regional expert group meeting on gender issues in human settlements and the award winning ceremony for the first Asian contest on gender-responsive local governments and women-friendly cities, held in March 2004. The women's organizations were also represented on the jury for the Asian contest and participated in the consultation on women's rights to adequate housing, organized in collaboration with the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, which was held in Mexico in January 2004. UN-Habitat has carried out studies on women's rights to land and property as part of a larger study in Latin America, the findings of which will be published in 2004.

23. Women's organizations continue to participate in the steering committees of the global campaigns on secure tenure and urban governance and the best practices programme. The local-to-local dialogue tool kit, prepared by the Huairou Commission on Women and Habitat with the support of UN-Habitat, will be published in 2004, and a workshop on engendering local governments will be convened during the second session of the World Urban Forum, to be held in Barcelona from 13 to 17 September 2004, to share experience among women's organizations and interested partners. The Huairou Commission and its networks will also hold various networking events during the second session of the Forum. Further, UN-Habitat worked in partnership with women's organizations to organize parallel events on gender, water and sanitation and women in human settlements in conjunction with the twelfth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, held in New York from 14 to 30 April 2004.

24. Overall, more resources are needed to support the activities undertaken by women's networks in the area of human settlements development.

25. UN-Habitat is cooperating with member States to address the issues facing young people:

(a) The Government of the Netherlands has provided support to the UN-Habitat work programme on youth in the areas of social crime prevention and sustainable livelihoods;

(b) The Government of Norway has supported the participation of young people from developing countries at sessions of the UN-Habitat Governing Council;

(c) The Government of Kenya has developed an integrated youth policy in Nairobi, which includes the establishment of a city-wide one-stop integrated youth development centre;

(d) The Government of the United Republic of Tanzania is developing an integrated youth policy at the local level, which includes the establishment of a city-wide youth council in Dar-es-Salaam;

(e) The Government of South Africa hosted an international conference on sustainable safety, which included an international youth meeting that was based on South Africa's good practices in regard to youth crime prevention and sustainable livelihoods;

(f) The Government of Mexico will be hosting an international conference on urban youth at risk in Monterrey in October 2004 to define a regional strategy for Latin America and the Caribbean.

26. UN-Habitat participated in a high-level panel on youth employment, held at the headquarters of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 2003. Urban issues were included in the panel's recommendations. Together with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and ILO, UN-Habitat organized an expert group meeting on urban youth employment. The meeting, held in Nairobi in June 2004, followed up the recommendations of the high-level panel concerning the urban aspects of youth employment, which relate to Goal 7, target 11, of the Millennium Development Goals.

27. A draft regional strategy on urban youth at risk in Africa has been prepared and a draft strategy on enhancing the engagement of youth in UN-Habitat is under preparation. Consultations have been held with young people at various forums. Cooperation with local authorities has been strengthened in cities in which UN-Habitat has implemented programmes in order to add the component of capacity-building for youth employment and poverty alleviation. Capacity-building frameworks, or city-wide one-stop youth information resource centres, have been launched (e.g., in Kenya), facilitated by local authorities in partnership with the private sector and youth organizations.

28. The global partnership initiative on urban youth development in Africa is to be launched at the second session of the World Urban Forum. The initiative was spearheaded by city mayors in the context of the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

29. UN-Habitat is also cooperating with various United Nations agencies in youth-related initiatives, as follows:

(a) The Department of Economic and Social Affairs cooperates with UN-Habitat in connection with its youth work programme, which included the preparation of the *World Youth Report 2003: The Global Situation of Young People*;[6]

(b) The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has signed a memorandum of understanding with UN-Habitat in regard to programmes targeting youth and crime prevention;

(c) The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is engaged with UN-Habitat in ongoing discussions on training manuals (e.g., the UNESCO manuals on growing up in cities and on urban youth crime prevention), with the possibility of launching a joint training programme;

(d) ILO is jointly involved with UN-Habitat in organizing an expert group meeting on urban youth employment, to be held in Nairobi in 2004;

(e) The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is engaged in the exchange of information and is collaborating in the development of a youth consultative mechanism, based on its experience in this area;

(f) The United Nations Children's Fund is collaborating with UN-Habitat in regard to the policy dialogue on youth, children and urban governance, to be held during the 2004 World Urban Forum;

(g) The World Bank, with the participation of UN-Habitat, held a youth, development and peace conference as part of the new World Bank strategy on youth and children. Joint activities in Kenya are under consideration.

30. The Cities Alliance was launched in 1999, with initial support from the World Bank and UN-Habitat, the political heads of the four leading global associations of local authorities and 10 Governments: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. The Asian Development Bank joined the Cities Alliance in 2002 and UNEP and Brazil joined in 2003. UN-Habitat is active in the Cities Alliance at the policy level, as a member of the Consultative Group, and in the field, where its regional offices are instrumental. The Executive Director of UN-Habitat is a co-chair of the Cities Alliance, together with the World Bank's Vice President for Infrastructure.

31. The Consultative Group meets annually, and the 2003 meeting was held in Sao Paulo, Brazil. The Chairman of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat was invited to attend the meeting to provide the general views of member States. In addition, the Policy Advisory Board of the Cities Alliance gathers together eminent experts able to present the experience and needs of developing countries.

32. The Cities Alliance has mobilized over $60 million in grant funding since its inception, and Norway and Sweden recently increased their funding contribution, while Italy announced its intention to extend its non-core contribution for Latin America. Funds are used to support the preparation of pro-poor city development strategies and large-scale slum upgrading programmes, as operational extensions of the global campaigns on urban governance and secure tenure, respectively. Recent initiatives include the state-wide slum upgrading programme in Bahia, Brazil. A proposal for a national slum upgrading programme in Morocco is expected.

33. An independent evaluation of the Cities Alliance undertaken in 2002 praised the Alliance's achievements, in particular those of placing the issue of urban poverty and slums on the international agenda and improving collaboration among its members, including that between UN-Habitat and the World Bank. The shared activities of the two organizations in the Cities Alliance have contributed significantly to improved collaboration between the two, for example, the active participation of the World Bank in the first session of the World Urban Forum, and the representation of UN-Habitat at the Urban Research Symposium hosted by the World Bank in December 2002 and again in December 2003. The two agencies are collaborating closely in the Millennium Task Force on slums and on an increasing number of operational activities. Notable areas of collaboration have included the activities undertaken in various countries, such as Brazil, Madagascar, Nigeria, the Philippines and Viet Nam. UN-Habitat has seconded a senior manager to the World Bank to strengthen the capacity of the Cities Alliance secretariat and to manage and expand its urban upgrading portfolio.

34. The theme of the second World Urban Forum is "Cities: crossroads of cultures, inclusiveness and integration". There are two main types of events at the Forum: dialogues and networking events. The networking events are geared towards a smaller and more specialized audience. The dialogues are designed to promote an exchange of views among a broad spectrum of participants.

D. Coordination

35. UN-Habitat is participating in the United Nations Development Group at various levels. The Executive Director of UN-Habitat participates in the heads of agency meetings of the Group, while other staff members participate in its support group, programme group and other relevant meetings. This has improved collaboration with other United Nations agencies, programmes and funds and with country teams in regard to the Habitat Agenda, the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium[7] and the relevant goals and targets of the Millennium Declaration.

36. The Millennium Development Goals have been integrated into new guidelines for the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and linkages between common country assessment and UNDAF, the Millennium Development Goals and poverty reduction strategy papers have been clarified. This gives more visibility to human settlements issues, with particular reference to the Millennium target of significantly improving the lives of at least 100 slum-dwellers by 2020 and to the challenge of meeting at least half of the rapidly growing urban demand for safe drinking water and adequate sanitation by 2015.

37. In line with the memorandum of understanding signed with UNDP in September 2002, UN-Habitat has started to assign Habitat programme managers to selected UNDP country offices. This initiative ensures a better coordination of UN-Habitat programmes with the priorities of national Governments and assists the resident coordinator system by providing both national and international expertise on shelter, sustainable human settlements and urban poverty in connection with the common country assessment and UNDAF processes. By the end of 2004, 33 programme managers are expected to be in place.

E. Disaster mitigation and rehabilitation

38. UN-Habitat is mandated, through the Habitat Agenda, to take the lead in disaster mitigation and rehabilitation with regard to human settlements. This mandate is being implemented through its Disaster Management Programme, which provides support to governments, local authorities and communities in strengthening their capacity to manage natural and man-made disasters. The long experience of UN-Habitat in pre-, mid- and post-disaster planning and implementation proves that, in many post-disaster scenarios, it is most effective when interventions are designed to begin simultaneously (i.e., consideration of the long-term impact of short-term humanitarian interventions can add value to the latter and depth to the former). In support of UN-Habitat activities in the emergency response and humanitarian areas, the Executive Director in early 2004 was invited to represent the Programme in the Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs, and actively participates in its meetings.

39. In close collaboration with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), UN-Habitat projects in Kosovo continued to be implemented in three key areas: the rehabilitation of the municipal administration; the development of new spatial planning legislation; and the restoration of property and land registries. The Kosovo programme also includes the training of local government officials, in collaboration with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the European Union. A new governance and development planning programme was formulated and its implementation begun in early 2004. UN-Habitat has also been working more broadly in the region; the objectives of the Settlement and Integration of Refugees Programme in Serbia are to develop local and republic-wide capacities for dealing with refugee integration and improving living conditions for refugees through the promotion of sustainable housing and social and economic integration. Further, UN-Habitat remains responsible for supporting the Housing and Property Directorate in Serbia and Montenegro. Building cross-border linkages is of crucial importance in reducing ethnic tensions and making progress towards long-term peace and stability in the region. In this regard, project identification was undertaken in 2003 in southern Serbia and in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to strengthen local capacities in undertaking strategic urban development planning at the municipal level. In Croatia, UN-Habitat had formulated by the end of 2003 a project on strengthening the capacity of local governments in the fields of administration and development.

40. UN-Habitat, in collaboration with the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, held a regional consultation on local management and disaster reduction in the Caribbean region in September 2002, with participants from eight Central American and Caribbean States. The main objective of the consultation was to develop a harmonized regional disaster mitigation and management capacity for local governments at the municipal level. By December 2003, the final document had been produced and recommendations prepared in collaboration with UN-Habitat Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean. The identification of potential donors and fund-raising activities have been undertaken in 2004. The formulated methodology and strategy for regional consultations, based on the success of the Cuban experience, was introduced in Mozambique in March 2003, during the first mission carried out under the Disaster

Management Programme. The objective is to develop a programme for technical support and cooperation with municipalities in the formulation of disaster reduction plans as part of overall municipal management. The process is ongoing, and it is anticipated that the Disaster Management Programme will replicate the local consultation among the selected municipalities in Mozambique in the biennium 2004-2005, subject to funding availability. In the same biennium, the strategy will be applied in seven small island developing States in collaboration with the Global Environment Facility and UNDP, with the primary objective of reducing the vulnerability of local communities to climate change hazards by improving the skills of municipal authorities and local organizations in disaster management.

41. The rehabilitation of roads in southern Sudan has continued, with the goal of ensuring the delivery of humanitarian supplies to local communities and their increased self-reliance through improved transportation and exchange of goods and services. UN-Habitat continues to be actively involved in supporting the United Nations and World Bank-led joint assessment missions in Sudan. In Liberia, UN-Habitat prepared input for the consolidated appeal process in two selected sectors: protection of the land and property rights of displaced populations and establishment of a reconstruction strategy for the country. In Somalia, the UN-Habitat Disaster Management Programme provides ongoing support to field programmes, in particular in such important areas as the sensitizing and training of trainers in regard to gender mainstreaming in post-conflict local governance. In other gender-related activities, UN-Habitat and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction office in Kenya conducted in late 2003 a regional gender and disaster management review of gender and disaster management policy in Africa. The review is part of the broader aim of the Strategy and UN-Habitat to bring a greater focus to gender issues in all disaster management activities. The draft report and recommendations were released at the end of December 2003.

42. In 2004, after the tragic earthquake in Bam, Islamic Republic of Iran, UN-Habitat undertook an assessment mission and prepared a proposal for the provision of intermediate shelter as a component of permanent shelter reconstruction, with a special focus on earthquake-resistant construction methods, community consultation and capacity-building. The proposal is currently under review by the UNDP office in Tehran. In late 2003, the Interdepartmental Framework for Coordination formulated a strategy for building national capacity for conflict prevention in Ghana. The Framework team contacted several United Nations agencies, calling for interest and availability in furthering the proposed medium-term activities. In response to the request UN-Habitat undertook an identification mission to Ghana in March 2004, and has prepared a proposal addressing pertinent issues, such as land administration, good governance and economic revitalization through the generation of new livelihood activities, as part of a strategy to ensure continued stability in Ghana. UN-Habitat also participated in the United Nations multidisciplinary assessment mission sent to Haiti to assess the humanitarian and development needs of the country, and proposed short-, medium- and long-term response actions. The mission developed a strategy for the involvement of UN-Habitat in the implementation of response projects in the country and prepared a proposal on preparatory assistance for vulnerable urban communities and local governments. UN-Habitat remains active in the ongoing consultations and in the meetings held with donors and other support agencies in this regard.

43. The development of user-friendly tools for disaster reduction, and for emergency aid and reconstruction in post-conflict situations, has continued. In particular, the first stage of a series on gender in post-conflict situations has been completed, and a comprehensive tool for addressing land and property administration in post-conflict situations will be launched in September 2004. The development, in collaboration with UNDP and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, of a web-based registry of disaster reduction tools and norms will continue until the end of 2004.

44. The multisectoral and interdisciplinary nature of disaster reduction and response requires continuous interaction, cooperation and partnerships among related institutions in order to achieve global objectives of disaster mitigation and sustainable post-crisis rehabilitation. UN-Habitat continues to facilitate partnerships in disaster management and to support the establishment of a dialogue among United Nations agencies, the donor community, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Memorandums of understanding were signed in May 2003 with the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and in November 2003 with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. As a critical element of the implementation of the latter, a UN-Habitat surge facility was established in 2003 to enable UN-Habitat to deploy short-term relief assistance missions in support of sister agencies and the Governments of affected countries. UN-Habitat continues to support the efforts of the Strategy within the context of the inter-agency task force, in particular by coordinating a substantive consultation on urban risk as input to the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, to be held in Kobe, Japan, in January 2005.

F. The twelfth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

45. At its twelfth session, the Commission on Sustainable Development reviewed the implementation of Agenda 21,[8] the Programme for Further Implementation of Agenda 21[9] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation")[10] focusing on the thematic cluster for 2004-2005: water, sanitation and human settlements.

46. UN-Habitat worked very closely with the Division for Sustainable Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the regional commissions and other agencies and organizations in the preparations for the twelfth session of the Commission.

47. UN-Habitat collaborated with the Secretariat in the preparation of the Secretary-General's report on human settlements and other background documents, including the outline of national reports on human settlements.

48. UN-Habitat organized three side events on the themes "Empowerment of urban youth: challenges and opportunities for youth partnerships", "Access to basic services" (convened jointly with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research) and "Achieving the Millennium Development Goals on water and sanitation: unheard voices of women". The latter was appreciated by many delegations in the plenary sessions and recognized as an innovative event that provided an opportunity for young women to express their views.

49. UN-Habitat organized a learning centre event on urban governance tools to support sustainable urbanization. The three-hour session was attended by representatives of local and national governments, civil society organizations, international non-governmental organizations, development practitioners and academia. The session served to showcase key tools of the Global Campaign on Urban Governance, including the urban governance index, the transparency toolkit and the participatory budgeting toolkit.

50. The Commission at its twelfth session raised several important issues related to water and sanitation in the context of human settlements. Noting that cities and towns would absorb 95 per cent of the world's expected population growth, it was noted that rapid urbanization would increase poverty and the feminization of poverty in cities, and that women would pay a heavy price in procuring water for their families through daily drudgery and lost opportunities. It was suggested that UNDAF and the World Bank's poverty reduction strategy papers should assign priority to water and sanitation and slum upgrading. Discussions in the sessions and panels reflected that the financing of water, sanitation and slum upgrading required a close partnership between the United Nations system and the international financing institutions to supplement domestic resources.

III. Conclusions and recommendations

51. **Multilateral and bilateral assistance for housing and urban infrastructure amounts to roughly US$ 4 billion annually, including US$ 3 billion in loans from multilateral development banks (mainly for transport and water infrastructure) and US$ 400 million in technical assistance. These resources have not increased in recent years and play only a limited supporting role in view of the magnitude of the needs in terms of housing and basic services in developing countries.**

52. **A number of Governments have included shelter and urbanization issues in their national development strategies. The link between sustainable urbanization policies and poverty reduction strategies remains to be clarified and strengthened in many developing countries. Increased international cooperation is required in this area.**

53. **While major gains have been registered during the period 2000-2003 in implementing the United Nations Human Settlements Programme by engaging Habitat Agenda partners, human and financial resource constraints have limited the achievement of better results in partnership activities. There is a realization that promoting active participation in such international and intergovernmental forums as the World Urban Forum and the Governing Council of UN-Habitat is as important as the system-wide and continuous engagement of the Habitat Agenda partners. This two-pronged approach needs to be continued.**

54. **Governments are encouraged to include water, sanitation and human settlements in their national development plans and to integrate urban poverty in national poverty reduction strategy documents.**

55. **Governments in a position to do so are encouraged to increase the non-earmarked component of their contribution in order to facilitate the**

implementation of the Habitat Agenda, the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium and the relevant commitments of the Millennium Declaration, in particular the commitment to achieve a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020.

56. Governments and financial institutions are encouraged to contribute generously to the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund and the Special Human Settlements Programme for the Palestinian people to enable UN-Habitat to assist in resolving the long-term deterioration in human settlement conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and in fully realizing the objectives of the Programme.

57. Governments and international agencies are encouraged to review and promote the role of cities in sustainable development as the engines of economic growth and to assess their social risk and opportunity, as well as their potential assets in relation to rural hinterlands.

58. Governments are encouraged to support the participation of partner groups from developing countries at the World Urban Forum, to be held in Barcelona, Spain, in 2004.

Notes

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 8* (A/58/8), annex I.

[2] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul, 3-14 June 1996* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.97.IV.6), chap. I, resolution I, annex II.

[3] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.III.B.1.

[4] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.04.III.Q.1.

[5] See General Assembly resolution 55/20.

[6] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.IV.7.

[7] General Assembly resolution S-25/2, annex.

[8] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

[9] General Assembly resolution S-19/2, annex.

[10] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.